

## READING COMPREHENSION (20 marks)

### TASK 1

Fit the sentences below into the gaps of the text. There are THREE sentences that do not belong to the text. Match the gaps numbers with the letters. Q is the example. (6 items x 0'8)

### THE STRADIVARIUS VIOLIN

A violin made by Antonio Stradivari is perhaps one of the most coveted instruments in the world. \_\_\_\_\_(0)\_\_\_\_\_ **A (Example)**. Master musicians everywhere covet a Stradivarius for the pure, beautiful sound that it brings to their music. Others are drawn to the instrument's astonishing track record as an investment whose value rises every year.

Each Stradivarius violin has its own unique characteristics. And each instrument is known individually by name. \_\_\_\_\_(1)\_\_\_\_\_. Violins created by many craftsmen are named in this way. It is rare for a Stradivarius violin to come up for sale on the open market. \_\_\_\_\_(2)\_\_\_\_\_.

The man who made such treasured violins, Antonio Stradivari, was born in 1644 in Cremona in Italy. He established his workshop in the town where he was born and made violins there until his death, aged 93, in 1737. His grandfather, Andrea Amati, is generally considered to have perfected the form of the modern violin. \_\_\_\_\_(3)\_\_\_\_\_.

However, Stradivari made harps, guitars, violas and cellos as well as violins. Indeed he is believed to have made a total of 1,100 instruments, of which 650 still survive today.

\_\_\_\_\_ (4)\_\_\_\_\_. A few years ago it was proposed that the secret to the success of the violin was in the preservative that Stradivari used to treat the wood. \_\_\_\_\_(5)\_\_\_\_\_. Experts believe it winds the wood in a unique way and that is the source of the instrument's wonderful acoustic qualities.

Despite great advances in the way musical instruments are made, concert violinists believe that the centuries-old instruments of the great Italian craftsmen have a better sound than any instrument made today. \_\_\_\_\_(6)\_\_\_\_\_. Until someone finds a way to mass produce the magic that is in a Stradivarius, we must hope that the world's stock of these instruments is held safe for public enjoyment for centuries to come.

- A. ~~A Stradivarius violin is an undisputed masterpiece~~ 0 (Example)
- B. And there is no doubt that Stradivari gained much treasured knowledge from him
- C. And this sound works on our senses to create the most wonderful music we are ever likely to hear
- D. The *Gibson* Stradivari has been stolen on two separate occasions
- E. The substance, known as borax, fell out of use by violin makers after Stradivari's time
- F. However, climatologists maintain that this wood was created through slow tree growth
- G. So it is hard for experts to calculate the true value of any particular violin at a given time
- H. Thus, the violin was baptized by the name by which it is known today
- I. It's usually that of a famous former or talented musician associated with the playing of it
- J. What makes a violin made by Stradivari so special?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
A						

## TASK 2

Match each paragraph with the most suitable title. There are THREE titles you do not need to use. Q is the example. (6 items x 0'8)

### WEIRD NEWS

- A. ADVISING THROUGH BREAK-UP
- B. BLAME IS ON THE NET
- C. JAILED AFTER BREAKING THE LAW
- D. LOVE-SICK ANIMAL CAUSES CHAOS
- E. NEW TOOL FOR MORE BEARABLE VISITS
- F. ONLINE LOVE FOREVER
- G. SAVING TIME ON CONGESTED DAYS
- H. TWIN PLACES 0 (Example)**
- I. UNCONSCIOUS OFFENDERS
- J. USELESS TOOL

0. The rural Scottish village of Glenelg has announced an unlikely link with its planet Mars namesake, situated more than 35 million miles away. The coastal community, situated in the Highlands of western Scotland, shares the same name as a location on the Red Planet and it has now announced its intention to hold a ceremony this month. **H (Example)**
1. If you struggle to find a parking space in the morning, or take hours off your weekend shopping trip by looking for a gap to squeeze your car into, worry no more. A new application could save you stress at the wheel by doing the hard work for you. The Car Park Finder tells you which car parks are nearby, how much they cost and how long you can stay for.
2. The government has revealed plans for a 'divorce app' available via the web and smartphones to help couples through the process of separation. The application will offer support and advice to people splitting from their partner, as well as tips on how to behave in front of their children. There will also be advice offered on avoiding arguments, sorting out child support payments and how to cope with meeting an ex's new partner.
3. Experts have seen a sharp rise in the number of divorces in which Facebook pages were used as evidence of 'unreasonable behaviour', as suspicious people now regularly use the site to check up on their spouses. Divorces involving social networking sites are no longer eye-catching events as they have become so commonplace. Lawyers suggested last year that Facebook flirting could be involved in as many as a fifth of divorces.
4. An elderly couple have had a huge cannabis plant seized by police after buying it at a car boot sale. Police said the plant seized was the biggest they had seen. The couple, who were simply looking for a pot plant at the boot sale, were shocked to find that the shrub they had cultivated was a giant cannabis plant, which had taken over a large area of their suburban garden. It is unclear whether or not the pair will be charged over the cannabis plant.

5. An innovative dentist hopes to ease his patients' surgery fears after creating a musical drill to help keep their mind off the intrusive instrument. He modified a conventional dentist drill to play music via an MP3 player instead of the custom buzzing sound usually associated with a dentist surgery. He hopes to make those dreaded trips to the dentist slightly more bearable by using this tool to lighten the mood.
6. A runaway ostrich provoked a rush hour police chase after escaping from its Florida home in a mating season moment of madness. Amorous four-year-old bird Taco jumped over a garden fence trying to find a female companion before running about aimlessly onto a busy motorway. The feathered fugitive approached several cars and even a man on a scooter, causing traffic jams during its early morning breakout.

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### TASK 3

Fill gaps 1-8 in the following text using the words in the bank below. There are FOUR words you do not need to use. Q is the example. (8 items x 0'8)

#### DENIM JEANS

Almost every teenager and, in fact, most people below the age of sixty in the western world (0) own (Example) a pair of jeans. Whether they are a heavily discounted pair from a supermarket chain \_\_\_\_\_(1)\_\_\_\_\_ a high-fashion designer pair costing hundreds of pounds, jeans form an integral part of any modern wardrobe.

But jeans were not always \_\_\_\_\_(2)\_\_\_\_\_ a universally recognisable fashion item. Indeed, jeans' humble origins date \_\_\_\_\_(3)\_\_\_\_\_ to 1873 and to two men, Loeb Strauss, who later changed his name to Levi, and his customer, Jacob Davis. Jacob Davis regularly bought material from Strauss' store. Davis had some troublesome customers who constantly tore the pockets of their denim trousers. As an experienced tailor, he put metal rivets or fasteners in the areas where his customers' trousers were mostly strained, \_\_\_\_\_(4)\_\_\_\_\_ are the pocket corners and the base of the button fly. \_\_\_\_\_(5)\_\_\_\_\_ a result, he created a garment suitable for the hardest working conditions.

In today's fashionable world jeans are constantly changing, but the blue colour dominates in most jeans designs. Denim is \_\_\_\_\_(6)\_\_\_\_\_ in fashion terms because it is associated with a single colour. Cloth makers originally chose to make their denims blue because the natural indigo dye was cheap to produce and easy to find.

Neither Jacob Davis nor Levi Strauss consciously intended to invent one of the world's most popular clothing lines of all time. They simply wanted to produce high-standard clothing for hard-working times. The transformation of working men's trousers \_\_\_\_\_(7)\_\_\_\_\_ hot and ever-trendy fashion items is one of the most remarkable makeover stories of modern times. Just like fashion \_\_\_\_\_(8)\_\_\_\_\_, the more jeans change, the more they stay the same.

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## TASK 4

Read the following text. For questions 1-5, choose the option a), b), c) or d) that best fits each gap. Write the correct answer on the answer sheet provided. 0 is the example. (5 items x 0'8)

### COMMUNITY SPIRIT IS KEY TO CHANGE

A decade ago I visited Modbury, a picturesque, (0) **rather** (Example) conservative village in England, to (1) how it became the first town in Europe to ban plastic bags in shops. It (2) Modbury a month to go plastic bag-free after resident Rebecca Hosking showed local traders a film she (3) about plastic bags killing marine life in Hawaii. It was amazing to see how quickly behaviour changed. Suddenly, carrying a plastic bag was antisocial behaviour.

This change is driven by direct experience: villagers are (4) by the plastic invading their shores after the photographer Gail Tudor, Plastic Free Modbury member, showed pictures of plastic pollution on a 10-day trip around Britain's coast.

Small communities are again leading the transformation of our antisocial relationship with plastic. We assume that cities are the birthplace of innovation (5), in Britain, sustainable living is often being led by small communities.

Adapted from *The Guardian Weekly*, 2018

0. a) a lot                      b) bit                      c) far                      d) **rather**
1. a) check out                b) find out                c) look after              d) look for
2. a) lasted                      b) spent                      c) took                      d) wasted
3. a) 'd just made              b) 's made                      c) 's making              d) was made
4. a) delighted                b) sensible                      c) unsure                      d) shocked
5. a) because                      b) but                      c) however                      d) where

0	1	2	3	4	5
D					